

Report on English Language Lessons through an Environmental Animation for a Japanese College

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Abstract

This report covers a 1st year required semester long English language class which was undertaken in a Japanese junior college for forty freshmen in environmental engineering in 2008. These consecutive lessons were implemented to create a four skills integrated English course using a 17 minute animation video called “Mina’s Village and the River” produced by Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO(ACCU) in 1998. The video was produced to raise awareness about water conservation. It is one of the ACCU’s environmental animation series which is produced for environmental education for elementary and junior high school students and adults in adult education classes in Asia and Pacific regions. In this lesson, the English version of the video was used as language teaching material.

Key words: teaching report, material design, video, four skills integrated lessons and environmental education.

1. OVERVIEW OF UTILIZING VIDEOS/MOVIES IN THE LANGUAGE CLASS

Videos can be used in the classroom to effectively capture students’ attention. According to Takiguchi (2007), the incorporation of movies into Japanese English lessons has a relatively short history of about 20 years. Even though the use of movies in the English classroom began in the ‘60s, the purpose at the time was mainly script. In the ‘80s, video cassettes became widely available and movies began to be incorporated in the classroom in much the way they are used today. The continuing development of video equipment and software allowed for the use of movies as a centerpiece of the lessons. In 1995, The Association for Teaching English Through Movies (ATEM) was established for the purpose of researching the incorporation of movies in English lessons.

A number of creative English teaching reports for using video for different age levels have been featured in English education magazines such as *The English Teachers’ Magazine*, (volume 56, number 9) and *The New English Classroom* (volume 462). Benefits for both instructors and learners for using videos in English lessons have been introduced: easy access to the equipment, gaining students’ attention during the English lessons, effective explanations of different cultures, sending strong visual and verbal messages, learning the usage of particular targeted phrases in real life situations, etc. Depending on the goals, there are different ways of incorporating videos into the lesson: partial use (only a few selected

scenes) or whole use (including showing several whole movies for comparisons of videos with a similar theme.)

In incorporating video into the lesson, there are some points that need to be taken into consideration. Yoshiura (2008) states that depending on the students' age level appropriateness needs to be taken into consideration with cautions for historical facts, sexual scenes and vulgar language.

There is also a risk, however, that a lesson could end with students not learning the language but only being left with the thought that "class was fun!" or "lucky, we did not have a regular English class!" Therefore, it is crucial for the instructor to set explicit objectives and present them clearly to the students at the outset.

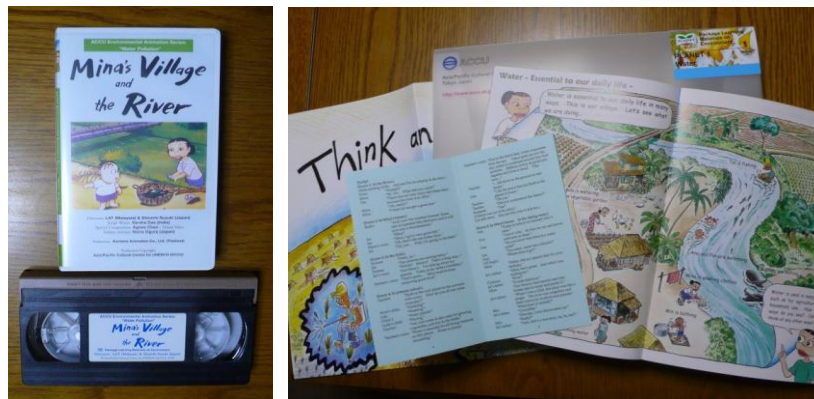
Obari (1995) reports on the selections and learning method of learning English through movies, suggesting that intensive listening practices by dictation activity is best for beginning English level learners. In addition, Obari suggests "movies that contain approximately 70 percent comprehensive material for the learners should be chosen" (p.15). In considering the use of movies in English language lessons for the purpose of improving students' listening ability, instructors are often presented with a difficulty: the speech speed of English is too advanced for the learners. Furthermore, the balance of content expressions, grammar and vocabulary level does not match with Japanese students' ability levels in most movies available. Selecting a video (or video scenes) which will help increase the targeted students' English ability is crucial.

Once an appropriate video is selected, offering sufficient time to focus on the sound of English in the class and providing appropriate related teaching materials help increase students' awareness and sensitivity toward the audit phase of English. Consequently, by reinforcing their listening skills and filling in the gaps in their English, students can learn to better manipulate the English they have learned over the years more efficiently in communication.

1.1 Introduction of the Teaching Material and Five Criteria for Choosing the Video

The video used in this project is part of the "Package Learning Materials on Environment 1, (PLANET 1)" produced by Asia/Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO (ACCU) in 1998. It is part of the environmental education series: PLANET 1 Water Pollution, PLANET 2 Forest Conservation, PLANET 3 Waste Management, and PLANET 4 Disaster Preparedness (still in development). This package includes a colored poster, a colored booklet and an animation video (Figure 1). Among these materials, only the 17 minute animation called "Mina's Village and the River" from PLANET 1 was used for this lesson. PLANET 1 was produced for the purpose of raising awareness toward water conservation using a simple story: the residents of Mina's village suffer from food poisoning caused by consuming fish from a polluted river and drinking water from a contaminated well; they then decide to clean their village on their own.

Figure 1: PLANET 1 Packet



¥2,499 Consumption tax and shipping fee are included

The video was selected as teaching material for those targeted students based on the following five reasons:

1.1.1 Length of the Video

To achieve the goals described above, a 17 minute video with 25 scenes is an appropriate length in the limited semester period.

1.1.2 Language Level

With this movie, most sections are at an appropriate level for students to read the script if they are given a short instruction or enough time to consult a dictionary. With regards to the listening phase, it is still beyond their language level. It would be quite difficult for them to even follow the speed of the recorded sound without a written script.

1.1.3 Natural Speed and Expression of the Language (Authentic Materials)

This video is not made for language teaching; therefore, the recorded speech is natural and the material is authentic. Students need to be exposed to and practice English at a natural speed at some time in the course of their study so that they are not overwhelmed by the speed of conversation when they have to face the real world.

In terms of the expressions used in the video, colloquial daily conversational expressions are used, something to which target students are not often exposed. This video is made for educational purposes and while it includes colloquial language, the expressions are suitable for the lessons.

1.1.4 Theme of the Video

The targeted students were majoring in environmental engineering. Using materials which are in their field of interest that also introduce basic environmental expressions helps motivate even those students who are not interested in learning English.

1.1.5 Animation

Each character's unique personality and illustrations leave a strong impression of the movie scenes. When compared to acting, animation allows for exaggerated expression of the message from both illustrations (visual) and the tone of voice (audio). Therefore, it enables the students to be able to receive hints from the animation even when watching it in English for the very first time. Even though they may not understand the story through the language, they are left with the impression that while the material is above their English level, it is manageable with effort.

1.2 Class Composition for the Lesson

The class consisted of 40 freshmen: 23 males and 17 females of mixed English proficiency. Some of the students had graduated from technical high schools where English was not a required subject for the last year prior to college entrance. One student had already passed the Japanese English proficiency test, Eiken - 2nd grade, and a few students passed the proficiency test for Pre- 2nd. This created a very wide gap of English proficiency among the students.

1.3 Objectives for the Students

The students' goals were set as follows: 1. to be able to listen to and understand the presented materials, 2. to be able to reproduce presented materials in English, 3. to be able to write a script and give brief presentations.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE LESSON

These consecutive one theme video lessons integrated four English skills: dictation and instruction in English (listening), understanding the content of dictated material (reading), reproduction of the script and presentations (speaking), writing a script for the presentation (writing). All of the lessons were conducted in English. It was the first time the students experienced a semester long class in English. Even listening to the directions for the activities could be a difficult task and could stress some of the students. Therefore, it was important to avoid the risk of students giving up even before trying and not paying attention. For this reason, activities were designed to be simple and to contain small tasks that students could follow easily. Furthermore, explaining each task visually increased their comprehension greatly. To provide a comfortable learning environment, a buddy system was implemented with two students to support each other. The cooperative learning system allowed the students to comfortably involve themselves in the work of the activity, encouraged their learning and increased their motivation toward the activities.

2.1 Detailed Description of the Lesson and the Students' Involvement


2.1.1 First Viewing

The first viewing of the video was played without any explanation of the story. During this first viewing, understanding the content was not emphasized. Rather, importance was placed on simply giving students their very first opportunity to experience watching an English-only video. During the scene where the village farmer sprays pesticide into the rice field without any consideration and attention to the human effect of spraying all the while chatting to his neighbor, there was laughter in the classroom. This reaction proved that even though it was produced only in English with no Japanese subtitles, students were paying attention and following the story. Observing students' reactions and facial expressions during and after their first viewing ensured that this was the right material for them.

2.1.2 Comprehension Level Check

Worksheets where students write the outline of the story and demonstrate their level of understanding were distributed. There were two objectives: 1. to check their comprehension level and 2. to record their first impressions of watching the video so that later they could look back at how much they had progressed. In addition, an introduction and illustrations of the main characters of the video from the booklet came with the video were given on the worksheet so they could use the characters' names when writing the outline of the story (Figure 2). Students' initial understanding of the English in the movie was also checked. All of the students commented that they understood the overall story with the illustrations, not the language. The more detail they described in the outline, the more the accuracy declined.

Figure 2: Worksheet Sample

<p>☆Please write your impressions and level of understanding below either in Japanese or English. Then briefly summarize the story in English.</p>																																							
	<p><u>Characters</u></p> <table><tr><td>Mina:</td><td>Village woman aged 28. Active, ready to take action with leadership</td></tr><tr><td>Jai:</td><td>Farmer, Mina's husband aged 30</td></tr><tr><td>Lita:</td><td>Mina and Jai's eldest daughter aged 11</td></tr><tr><td>Min:</td><td>Mina and Jai's eldest son aged 10</td></tr><tr><td>Lin:</td><td>Mina and Jai's second daughter aged 7</td></tr><tr><td>Pon:</td><td>Mina and Jai's second son aged 6</td></tr><tr><td>Ana:</td><td>Mina and Jai's youngest daughter aged 3</td></tr><tr><td>Jai's parents</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Nora:</td><td>Mina's neighbor, critical against Mina's activity</td></tr><tr><td>Nora's son:</td><td>Primary school student</td></tr><tr><td>Leela:</td><td>Village woman attending the literacy class</td></tr><tr><td>Leela's son:</td><td>Primary school student</td></tr><tr><td>Tin:</td><td>Fisherman</td></tr><tr><td>Farmer</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Literacy class teacher</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Primary school teacher</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Doctor in Town Clinic</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Nurse</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Village women in literacy class</td><td></td></tr></table>	Mina:	Village woman aged 28. Active, ready to take action with leadership	Jai:	Farmer, Mina's husband aged 30	Lita:	Mina and Jai's eldest daughter aged 11	Min:	Mina and Jai's eldest son aged 10	Lin:	Mina and Jai's second daughter aged 7	Pon:	Mina and Jai's second son aged 6	Ana:	Mina and Jai's youngest daughter aged 3	Jai's parents		Nora:	Mina's neighbor, critical against Mina's activity	Nora's son:	Primary school student	Leela:	Village woman attending the literacy class	Leela's son:	Primary school student	Tin:	Fisherman	Farmer		Literacy class teacher		Primary school teacher		Doctor in Town Clinic		Nurse		Village women in literacy class	
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<p>◆ <u>Warm-up Questions</u> ◆</p>																																							
<p>1. How many children do Mina and Jai have? ()</p> <p>2. What is Jai and Tin's occupation? ()</p> <p>3. Who is Mina's neighbor? ()</p> <p>4. What is Nora's personality? ()</p> <p>5. What do people learn in the literacy class? ()</p>																																							

2.1.3 Listening Practice

All of the divided video scenes were utilized as listening practice materials. For the first activity, a total of 10 pages of worksheets were distributed in the first lesson. On the worksheet, the video script was typed with some words and phrases left as blanks (Figure 3). The numbers of blanks differed; gradually the numbers increased toward the end, and sections where all the sentences needed to be dictated were included. Due to the students' big gap of English proficiency in the class, word choices were also offered to give hints to the students. In this activity, spelling was not the goal, so guessing the word from the word choices helped them not worry as much about spelling. The use of the word choices was left to each student, depending on their English listening level. The scenes needed to be played three to five times in order for the most of students to fill in the blanks.

Figure 3: Worksheet Sample

< Word lists : Scene 3 & 4 >

pistols / form / sky / water / essential / today / rice / earth / particles / creatures / planet(2) / vegetables / vapor / dust / preparing / droplets / circulating / lesson / birthday / due / evaporates / parents / talking / Mina's / drops / way

< Scene 3: In the field >

<p>Farmer: Hello, Jai.</p> <p>Jai: Our (1) are coming (2) .</p> <p>Farmer: Whose (3) ? That's a long (4) ...</p> <p>Jay's voice: Not Mina's I'm(5) about my parents. Today is my father's(6) .</p> <p>Farmer's voice: That's great... Mina must be busy (7) good food.</p>	
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< Scene 4: In primary school >

<p>Teacher: (8) is the only (9) in the universe with water. How do you all use (10) everyday?</p> <p>Nora's child: Drinking! Lita: Washing! Child 1: Water (11) !</p> <p>Leela's child: Playing.</p> <p>Teacher: Yes, and water is also used for growing (12) , and (13) in the fields. Water is(14) for all living(15) on this planet. Water is always(16) . (17) to the Sun's heart, water(18) from the sea.(19) goes up into the (20) , where it condenses around tiny (21) (22) . Millions of tiny (23) join together and(24) a cloud. They soon fall down to the ground as rain (25) .</p> <p>Lita: I see the proof that the Earth is the (26) of water.</p> <p>Teacher: Oh yes. Did you understand the (27) ?</p> <p>Students: Yes!</p>	
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In order for the students to focus on the sound of English without guessing the meaning from the animations, only the video's sound was played. After a few times, students compared their answers. Through observation, it was found that the peer check process was important for the student's learning; it raised the desire to learn the correct answers if their answers did not match. Then, after the scenes were played a few more times, the whole class checked the answers together.

2.1.4 Pronunciation Check

Since students were to pronounce the learned materials in pair work a number of times, practicing the correct pronunciation was important. After students practiced slowly as a class, they then practiced in pairs. Because rhythm is very important when reading as a class or with pairs, chorus reading with the video sound was done a few times. Observations of the class showed it to be challenging to read at natural speed; however, students were earnestly involved and enjoyed doing it.

2.1.5 Content Check

With the completed transcript by the dictation, students checked the content, including unfamiliar words and expressions, in pairs. The space on the right side of the worksheet of the dictation practice was for them to take notes. All of the students, however, turned out to be translating the entire script. Ideally, the goal of foreign language instruction is for students to get the meaning without translating; however, they often feel more comfortable translating every single sentence since they have been learning English in that manner for the past six years. If this practice helped the students, translating was allowed.

Then guiding the students toward translating into natural conversational Japanese was needed. Due to the influence of their past six years of English education, when they see English sentences, they are trained to translate them in a such a way that they use the polite written form of Japanese and in a way that they ensure they will receive points on the test. As a result, their manner of translating English tends to be very unnatural. For example, in the scene where the main character is chatting with the village farmer hoping her husband Jai can get good fish for his father's birthday dinner, the sentence "I hope Jai can get a good one." was translated in rigid formal Japanese: "Watashi ha Jai ga yoi mono wo toru koto ga dekiru koto wo nozomimasu." It was important, therefore, to discuss the work of a professional translator and explain that it is important not only to translate the meaning, but to deliver the language in the closest nuance. This process introduced the opportunity to understand meaning and put it in the appropriate form of the language which corresponds to the illustrated situation. The first worksheet (Figure 2) turned out to be useful for students to refer to the gender or the age of the characters of the video when they translated.

They compared their translations in pairs. Only in the cases where students asked questions were expressions shared in the class and explained. For example, the three year-old

child's utterance regarding the reason why it rains, "I know why. So that we can sail leaves with ants on them," and expressions such as "that's a long way," "time flies" and "take care" needed to be explained.

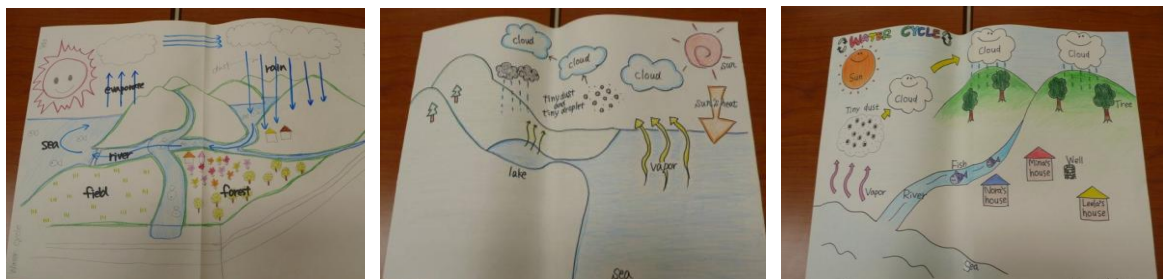
2.1.6 Review and Warm up

Steps 2.1.3-2.1.5 were followed for each of the remaining lessons. After the first class, each of the following lessons began with approximately 15 minutes of reviewing previous materials covered in the lessons with pair work. One student gave his/her own translated dialogues in Japanese and another student translated them back into English. Then the video was played starting from the previous section for review and continuing into the new section.

2.1.7 Presentation 1

Presentation projects were assigned between the lessons. Most students had never given a presentation even in their first language, Japanese. Therefore, this activity was begun by introducing the basics of the presentation and followed by having the students prepare a very short presentation. The first four important elements (oral, physical, organizational, visual) for making effective presentations were explained. Then they were asked to make an effective and attractive visual aid with a B4 sized sheet (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Presentation 1 - Visual Aids (Students' Work)



In this presentation, the scene where the teacher is explaining the circulation of water to school children was selected for the reason that in the video the teacher is a presenter and the students are the audience. This scenario gives a concrete presentation image when the students themselves prepare their presentation. Following is the script (Figure 5):

Figure 5: Presentation 1 - Scripts

Scene 4: In primary school

Water is essential for all living creatures on this planet. Water is always circulating. Due to the sun's heat, water evaporates from the sea. Vapor goes up into the sky, where it condenses around tiny dust particles. Millions of tiny droplets join together and form a cloud. They soon fall down to the ground as rain drops.

It is often said that Japanese presenters prepare the script and visual aids for a presentation well, but they do not practice delivery. For the purpose of reinforcing this point, students were not allowed to look at the script. This naturally made the students rehearse many times. In addition, eye contact is an important element to which students are not accustomed. Memorizing the script led them to practice numerous times before the presentation and also helped them make eye contact with the audience rather than focusing on their paper while they were presenting.

The following steps were implemented to make memorization easier:

1. Students followed steps 2.1.3-2.1.5 in the procedure section.
2. On a B4 size sheet of paper, each student wrote the six sentences line by line with Japanese on the front and English on the back (Figure 6). (Note: When students folded the paper into six pieces, some of them had not figured out how to divide it into six equally sized parts. A number of the students ended up dividing the paper into 8 pieces or more. This was unexpected and took more time than planned. If necessary, the instructor should demonstrate how to properly fold the paper.)
3. They then cut the paper in six pieces - one sentence per piece.
4. They placed all the strips in an irregular order with the Japanese version facing up.
5. The students listened to the sentence read in English to the class and chose the corresponding strip. To check the answers, students turned it over to see if they got the right one each time the questions were read. After performing this activity as a class, they practiced in pairs.
6. Then students placed the strips English side up in the right order corresponding to the correct sequence of water circulation.
7. Finally, they cut each strip in two pieces. They matched the first and second strips to form complete sentences and put the sentences in the correct order for water circulation. From this point, depending on the students' achievement level, they were encouraged to cut the strips into smaller pieces and practice individually with increasing difficulty. By the end of the activity, there was only one word on each piece of paper (Figure 7).

Figure 6: Strips

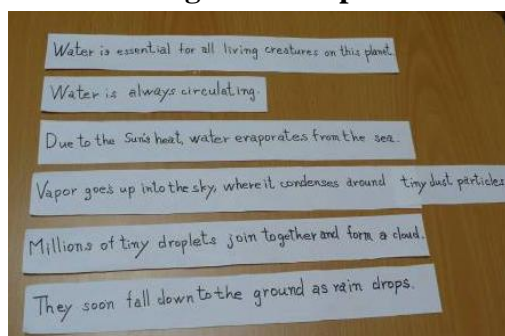
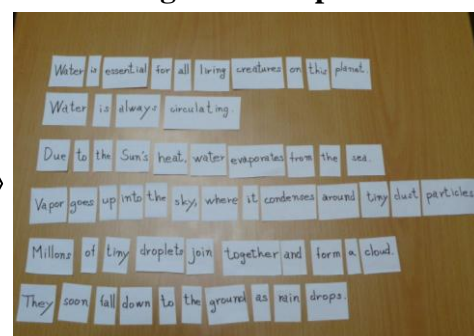


Figure 7: Strips



Until the students became comfortable with this passage, it was practiced as part of the warm up activity for a few classes.

Since this class had 40 students, the students were divided into ten groups for the presentations. After they arranged desks and chairs in groups, one person from the group stood up and presented while one member from the group stood next to the presenter holding the presenter's visual aid. In other words, 10 presentations were held at once. After all the members took turns, one person from the group was selected to present to the whole class. Most of presenters did not point to the visual aids while they presented. This resulted in the visual aid and the speech being separated for most of the presentation. Therefore, they were guided to use the prepared visual aid effectively during the presentation. For future improvement, the following rule will be added: Each presenter must use a pen as a pointer. This will help students to use their visual aid more effectively.

2.1.8 Presentation 2

The second presentation assignment required the students to present on “compost,” which was introduced in scene 23, when the village people are cleaning. The main character, Mina, suggested that the village people make compost. In this presentation, students were required to do research on compost and to write a script based on their research results. As in the first presentation, a B4 sized sheet was distributed and students were asked to make an attractive visual aid based on their presentation (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Presentation 2 - Visual Aids (Students' Work)



Here are some of the samples of original presentation scripts prepared by students (Figure 9). The following format was given to all the students: “Hello everyone. My name is ----- . Today, I would like to explain what compost is. Please take a look at this poster. (Your script) Thank you for listening. (Applause)”

Figure 9: Presentation 2 - Scripts (Students' Work)

< Student A >

Compost is a fertilizer that completely resolves the organism by the microorganism. There are facilities where the raw garbage is made compost to make garbage a loss in weight. And, in the ordinary family, the garbage is made compost bear oneself by using the composter. The salinity used for food concentrates, and whether harm is given to crops is worried about. It's unquestionable if it completely makes it to compost. The garbage made compost is an ingredient of the cooking ragman leftovers. However, because it takes time to the garbage of rotted one and shell for the resolution, it's unsuitable for the compost making. The change to use pesticide can be decreased by using compost. These are good for the environment.

< Student B >

Compost is made by naturally occurring that microorganism, bacteria and insects break down organic materials, such as fallen leaves grass clippings and certain kitchen garbage into a soil-like product. It is a form of recycling, a natural way of returning needed nutrients to the soil. By composting at home, we can reduce household waste by 30 %. If everyone composted, it would dramatically reduce the amount of household garbage, Best of all, compost is cheap. We can make it without spending money.

< Student C >

1. People grows crops to eat.
2. And, when we cook vegetable and so on, seeds and skins of vegetable remains.
Compost is made from this kitchen garbage, leaves, grass, branch and wastepaper.
3. We gather that garbage in one spot.
4. Then, we pour water and human and animal waste on them and make them rotten.
And this is compost.
5. We pour them on field. And crops grow well again.

From their scripts, even though the sentences could be clearer with some instruction and there were a few grammatical errors, it was evident that they spent time and effort outside of the class and tried hard.

The presentation method was the same as for presentation 1: first in the group, then representatives presented to the class. In this presentation, since they were reading the script, their eyes tended to stare at the script the whole time. In addition, because they composed the sentences using their dictionaries, there were a number of words that they were not sure how

to pronounce. Moreover, even though they knew it was important to make eye contact, it was not easy to do while they were presenting in English. It was hoped that at least by watching the presentations with the presenter's eyes focused only on the script, the other students as an audience learned what impression those presentations make.

Since the students are environmental engineering majors, a more detailed academic research result was expected to be presented; however most of the students' approaches and information turned out to be similar and relatively basic.

2.1.9 Second (Final) Viewing of the Video

Not since the initial viewing had the students watched the animation along with the dialogue. Throughout the lessons, students listened to each section at least eight times and practiced reading and reproducing the phrases again and again, without the animation. In spite of having heard the dialogue repeated so often, in this final viewing, as with the first viewing, students watched the video intently.

2.1.10 Written Impressions and Comments about Watching the Video

At the very end of the class, students were asked to write down their impressions and comments in Japanese. All of them commented that they were able to actually listen to and understand the spoken English. Many of them mentioned that when they heard the dialogue, the Japanese translation popped into their heads.

3. THE PEDAGOGICAL EFFECTIVENESS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LESSON

The lesson had the following four objectives:

3.1 Introduce and Practice Varieties of English Learning Methods

By experiencing different learning approaches, even the students who have not been interested in learning English find something beneficial in the lessons. Advanced students, who will keep studying English after the course is completed, find what works effectively for them.

In terms of instruction being given only in English, in the beginning of lesson students seemed very overwhelmed and uncomfortable being in a classroom environment in which all of the directions were given only in English. By making the lessons consistent with a series of simple, patterned but effective activities and also allowing time for them to check their understanding of the directions with their classmates from time to time, it made it easier for the students to follow the directions in English. This also motivated students and gave them more confidence with the language since they were able to receive the instruction entirely in English.

3.2 Expose Students to Natural English Conversation

The students have been exposed to written English and to the unnatural audio speed of teaching materials. Therefore, they are not familiar with the natural speed of colloquial English. Becoming familiar with natural English conversations strengthens and broadens their communication in English, building upon the traditional English class.

This video was appropriate English teaching material for these target students. In the first viewing, all the students commented that they were having difficulty understanding the spoken English and were getting the story from the animation alone. Numerous dictation activities positively influenced their listening ability. During the activity, they were quite focused on not missing any words. Even though the same section was played over and over; they did not lose their focus and did not feel as if it were tedious work. Through the activity, they were growing accustomed to the natural speed of English. The questionnaire at the end of the instruction revealed that all of the students claimed to be getting the meaning from the verbal English in the final viewing.

3.3 Offer a Comfortable Learning Environment

It is surprising that in spite of the fact that most of the students have had at least six years of English instruction, they have very low self-esteem regarding their English use. The first important role as a teacher was to create a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom. Lowering the anxiety level in the classroom was a fundamental part of the lesson. Creating an atmosphere where the students do not feel discouraged even when they make mistakes was necessary. For that purpose, a buddy system was implemented throughout the semester. This pair work based instruction made the classroom atmosphere lively. As mentioned earlier, most of the instruction was done in English, giving the students time to check what the teacher said among friends. The extra time given for students to check comprehension with friends helped those students whose English level was not sufficient to feel involved in the class. For the students who were able to help others, their confidence was built at the same time. The pair work for the lesson review activity, which included asking questions and giving hints, worked very well for both learners. The buddy system worked amazingly well; one could not ask for more. Students were learning from each other, giving hints and teaching each other while they asked the questions. When a student in the pair was taking charge of asking questions, he or she sounded like an instructor. This support system stimulated their motivation toward language learning and accelerated their learning. There were a lot of feelings involved while they were working on the pair activities. It was impressive to hear their support of each other.

3.4 Offer a Sense of Achievement

This group of students was not the exception of finding a big gap in the student's English proficiency in a class. Meeting the needs of every level of learners in the classroom was the biggest challenge. Planning lessons that would be beneficial for all the students was one of the

first priorities to take into consideration. This point was a core factor for planning every activity. Most of them had no exposure to English lessons instructed only in English. Most had never experienced watching English movies without Japanese subtitles nor had they prepared and given presentations. The experience of watching a video without Japanese subtitles made them feel more accomplished; one step up from before they watched it. Through this lesson, by experiencing new learning methods and completing each task one by one, students felt like they had achieved a higher level of English.

4. STUDENTS' EVALUATION

In the open-ended student questionnaire that reviewed the entire course, all of the students commented that they were able to get the meaning in English better from the final viewing than from their first viewing. They enjoyed and felt happy to be able to understand the English without subtitles and without guessing the meaning from the animation on the video when they watched after instruction. Many of them commented that the instant they heard the dialogue, the Japanese translation came out in their minds. This was the result of the repetitive pair work and dictation activities and also showed that repetitions of the same sections with small changes were effective, as planned. At the very least they listened and spoke each scene 13-15 times over the course of the lessons without getting bored. Also, some students commented that giving a presentation for the first time was interesting, even though preparing the scripts and effective visual aids took time. Also, one third of the students commented that the material was related to their field; making it more interesting. One student wrote that "This English class was the most enjoyable class that I have ever taken."

5. CONCLUSION

This video was very effective and beneficial for language instruction. It and the rest of the package materials of the PLANET series have broad possibilities for developing effective language teaching materials depending on the class size, language levels, students' interests and target skills.

Prior to planning the lesson with this video, a number of textbooks relating to the environment were reviewed. They are well organized books; however, the English level was well beyond the targeted students' proficiency, the terminology was too technical and they focused mainly on improving reading skills. Therefore, encountering this video was very fortunate. This video made it possible to design the course as the instructor envisioned, and then put it into practice. Students were engaged in four skills integrated learner-centered activities within one comprehensive theme. Students learned English through positively

influencing each other, thus further stimulating their learning.

It is also important to note that students were very obedient, they enthusiastically followed the instructions and they participated in the activities. Students were engaged with positive emotion and voices with each activity. Consequently, the planned activity greatly affected their English learning.

The planning and preparation of the twenty plus page handouts took time; however, once the semester was started, the instructor's major role in the class was to give brief instructions about the task and monitor the students. It allowed the instructor to easily identify and assist when the students were having difficulties by walking between the desks and evaluating the students' performance. With stated learner-centered activities, students helped each other to complete the tasks. The students' peer work system was extremely successful with this particular group of students. Each person experienced the role of a teacher; therefore, each student had to be responsible for what they were learning. In addition to the pedagogical effectiveness of these lessons, the students found learning English interesting and the lessons helped lower their affective filter toward English learning.

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